

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

By now, you are all well aware of the reported outcome of the May meeting of the State Board of Education regarding the Peebles Local School District issue. I must say that I was not surprised by any of the outcomes that I heard on May 9th or 10th. First of all, I had every confidence that the Ohio Department of Education would find through its feasibility study that there was no compelling evidence to support the creation of the PLSD. Anyone who really knows anything about education and the delivery of services to students in the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District knows that there is no compelling evidence to support the claims that we do not deliver appropriate services to our students, or of the need to create a new school district. I am forever amazed that the solution offered for delivering specific services to students is to contract with AC/OVSD for those services. If our school district is so terrible, why would anyone want to contract with us for services? What is the real point?

Secondly, I was not one bit surprised that the state board members rejected the recommendation of the ODE and State Superintendent Susan Zelman. The decision to take the “high road” by proceeding to create the new district removed the burden of responsibility from the shoulders of the board members and puts it back in the hands of the voters who reside in the proposed new district. The state board members may also be tired of hearing about all of the terrible atrocities at the hands of that wicked, three-headed monster known by the name of the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District. Therefore, the path of least resistance for the board members was to put the burden of

deciding this divisive issue back in the hands of the local citizenry of the proposed new district.

As I sat at those meetings in Columbus earlier this month, I listened to state board members express concerns over communication problems. While I will acknowledge breakdowns in communications between the individual schools and parents occasionally occur, I do not agree that those occurrences are deliberate. Furthermore, I know of no board/superintendent in our surrounding districts who attempts to communicate more with the public than what we have done in the past three years. That argument doesn't hold water.

How can a district accomplish as many things as ours has in the past three years in the midst of so much confusion and upheaval? Simple, it's the commitment of the staffs to continue doing the job at hand. Make no mistake about it; it's not easy for employees to concentrate on what they need to do in the middle of so much controversy and uncertainty. I am also very weary of the State BOE making the obvious assumption that the CCPLSD represents everyone's opinion on this subject in the Peebles attendance area. This is a very inaccurate assumption on their part.

Now we come to the realization that the State BOE may have violated ORC 3311.26 (Creation of a new local school district). It says that in order to propose the creation of a new district, the resolution must be approved by a majority vote of the full membership of the board. Since there are twenty-one members (nineteen voting) on the State BOE,

that would mean that at least ten of them would have to vote to approve such a resolution. As you know, the vote on May 10th was 9 to 6. First, the State BOE rejects the recommendation of the ODE to not create a new district. Then, they fail to follow ORC 3311.26.

To me, it doesn't matter whether you support this school district (AC/OVSD) or not. You deserve the right to be able to make that decision by going to the voting booth in your precinct and casting your vote. That is a part of our heritage as Americans. It is your opportunity to either speak up or "forever hold your comments." It's the opportunity for all voices to be heard and counted through the possible petition drive and possible subsequent vote. While I sympathize with the division that all of this has brought to the Peebles community and to individual families, I do look forward to final resolution on this topic. There is more work to be done, more progress to be made, and the board and I are anxious to get at it.

READING ACHIEVEMENT SCORES UPDATE

Our school district, along with districts from across Ohio, received word regarding the results of the Third Grade Reading Achievement Tests last week. The news on this topic appears to be very good for both our schools and district. Please keep in mind that this data will be "cleaned up" before final EMIS submissions next month. However, on the surface, it seems that not only did our school district earn this indicator for the second consecutive year, but all three of our elementary schools were also successful in achieving this indicator. Of the three elementary schools, West Union Elementary led the

way with 87.8% of its third graders passing the achievement test with a score that was at least Proficient or higher.

I will have more information on this test, as well as other achievement tests in a future article. However, I wanted to share this good news with you. Congratulations to all three of our elementary buildings, the third grade students, their parents, and their teachers for a job well done!

P.A.S.S. MEETING

The district based organization known as **P.A.S.S.** (People Advocating Superior Schools) will meet at **North Adams Elementary** on **May 31, 2005**. The meeting will begin at **7:00 p.m.**, and will feature an update on the status of the proposed building project for the district. The public is invited to attend. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pat Kimble at 544-5586.

SCHOOL'S OUT (ALMOST)!

Friday, May 27, 2005 will be the last day of school for students in the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District. School will be dismissed for students at 1:30 p.m. Attendance is crucial, as there will still be activities that need to be accomplished. Parents are asked to make certain that their child(ren) have all fees paid in full. Fees need to be taken care of before the final report cards are picked up after the conclusion of the

school year on May 27th. If you have any questions regarding report cards or any unpaid fees, please contact your building principal.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I wish each of our students and staff a safe, restful, and wonderful summer break. See you in August!

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent